

LESSON 3:

Understanding Expectations

His

Ours

Hers

“Unfulfilled expectations are often at the core of marital disillusionment.”

Expectations are assumptions about how things “should” be (i.e., demands). They are our “shoulds, oughts, and musts.”

Unfulfilled expectations FEEL like rejection.

When feeling angry or rejected, ask yourself, “What did I expect?”

Expectations are often: UNconscious, UNspoken, UNreasonable and UNsettled.

“We do not have a RIGHT to our expectations.”

“Turn expectations into HOPES.”

TOOLS FOR YOUR TOOLBOX

Scripture Notations:
Expectations p. 43

EXERCISE

I will keep a list of the times I get irritated or angry for one week. Next to each I will answer, “What did I EXPECT?” I will also ask, “Where did this come from and is it realistic?”

I will notice how often I use the word “should” or “ought” in relation to my spouse and see if I can translate any of these into hopes.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

Self:

- Do I know my expectations for: marriage, sex, love, money, holidays, children, in-laws, husband-wife roles, life in general?
- Are they realistic?
- Have I communicated them to my spouse? How many of them am I willing to make hopes rather than expectations?

In Relation to My Spouse:

- Do I know my spouse’s expectations on these subjects?
- When do we disagree?
- Am I willing to be flexible and negotiate our differences?